

there not something useful they could teach the people—for instance, how to make soap?

The missionaries were dismayed. But James Cameron came to the rescue. "Come back in a week," he said, "and perhaps we may be able to answer her majesty's question." Promptly at the end of a week they came again, and there waiting for them were two bars of soap made entirely from materials found in the island!

These two bars of soap saved the mission for the next five years. The queen was so delighted that she at once made a contract with the mission to supply the government with soap and teach some of the young nobles how to make it—a contract which took nearly five years for its fulfilment, doubtless because it was not hurried very fast.

Knowing that at any time they might be driven from the island, the missionaries now redoubled their efforts, their greatest desire being to leave the entire Bible in the hands of the converts should they be compelled to go away. In March, 1830, the first edition of 3,000 copies of the New Testament were ready for distribution, but the Old Testament was still far from completion.

But at length the dark clouds of persecution began to gather. The first indication of the coming storm was a proclamation issued in July, 1834, forbidding the people to learn to read and write anywhere save in the schools established by the government. Others followed which were evidently aimed against the Christians, and in January, 1835, the following charges were preferred against them before the chief judges—charges which give strong testimony to the purity and consistency of their lives: 1. They despise the idols. 2. They are always praying. 3. They will not swear by the opposite sex. 4. Their women are chaste. 5. They are of one mind in regard to their religion. 6. They observe the Sabbath as a sacred day.

Sunday School

PAUL ON THE GRACE OF GIVING.

December 5, 1909: 2 Cor. 8: 1-15.

GOLDEN TEXT.—"Remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, it is more blessed to give than to receive."—Acts 20: 35.

Mon.—2 Cor. 8: 1-15.

Th.—Exod. 26: 1-7.

T.—2 Cor. 9.

F.—Deut. 16: 9-17.

W.—Exod. 35:20-29.

S.—Prov. 11: 23-31.

S.—1 Chron. 29: 6-19.

SHORTER CATECHISM.

Q. 84. What doth every sin deserve?

A. Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life and that which is to come.

TOPICAL OUTLINE.

How Paul Stimulates Liberal Giving—

By the example of liberal Christians, vs. 1-6.

By the thought of Christ's sacrifice, vs. 7-9.

By broad principles of beneficence, vs. 10-15.

LESSON COMMENTS.

The company of believers in Judea knew but little of the churches that had sprung into active life along the lines of the journeys and labors of Paul and his companions in Asia Minor, in Macedonia and in Greece. The absence of any means of easy and rapid communication rendered it impossible for these two departments of the Church to have frequent and fraternal correspondence. Besides this, the Judean church being largely composed of Jews and the Western church largely of gentiles, these two departments of the Church were not very much disposed to know each other intimately. The barrier between Jew and gentile was stubborn and required time and varied experiences, some of them very trying, to get it out of the way. One of these experiences that contributed mightily to the removal of this "middle wall of partition" is the real basis of this lesson.

By reason of drought, commercial depression resulting from political disturbances or persecution, the Christians in Judea were in great straits. A famine was at hand. They must have help or suffer.

Paul laid the case before the churches of Macedonia, of Greece and Achaia. At once (in Macedonia) a new grace, a strange spectacle to the selfishness of natural men came into view and was at once recognized as one of the most potent and efficient means of conquest. God bestowed upon the churches in Macedonia "the grace of giving." Right in the midst of the gentile world, subject as it was to the basest and most pitilessly selfish manner of life, there arose as a new and splendid star in the heavens this grace. It would be difficult to overestimate its power. Paul himself appears to have been amazed, though delighted. So mighty was this grace that it was most manifest among the poorer members of the churches and they urged Paul to receive their gifts and transport them to Judea for the relief of their suffering brethren there.

Titus had evidently brought the matter in part before the church in Corinth on his former visit to that church, Paul had written about it also, and now in bearing this second letter of the Apostle, Titus is commissioned under God to complete this grace of giving for the relief of God's suffering saints in Judea. It will be seen by careful reading that He seeks to awaken this grace in them also by the following facts or methods:

1. He would have them know what God has done for the churches in Macedonia. If he had attributed the merit to the churches themselves, it would most likely have awakened feelings of envy and jealousy. Giving the glory to God, however, would awaken a hungering and thirsting after righteousness after this grace. Grace begets grace. The story of a revival simply recited has often been God's means of a revival in other churches.

2. He presented this not as a burden that had been imposed upon the churches of Macedonia, but as a privilege that they had claimed in order to fill out the demands of their own joy. It was no "grinding" process. It was a joy, the repression of which would not and could not be tolerated. Here is seen the true animus of giving. It is cheerful, joyful. See Jno. 3: 16.

3. This grace involved and was indeed preceeded by the gift of themselves to God and to Paul for the service of God in Christ. Truly that was a great revival—the emergence of a great stream of new life and power. Amid such conditions there is no thought as mention of "begging" for money for the needs of the Church of Christ. The begging is from the giver: begs that he may be allowed the privilege of giving.

4. The growth of grace ought to be with even progress. The Corinthian Christians had faith, were good talkers, were intelligent, were earnest Christians, loved Paul; now this quiet, sturdy grace of giving should have its place by the side of the others.

5. This was the shining grace of Christ. "Ye know the grace of the Lord Jesus who though he was rich yet for your sakes he became poor that ye through his poverty might be rich." A giving believer, one who gives in joy and love is like his Redeemer.

5. They had made a beginning a year ago and had expressed a willingness to give. This sort of willingness was of little worth unless they actually did the giving. A will without the work is of no worth.

6. The great law of the body of Christ is this hidden, but real insistence: Evenness, and equality of burdens. When one member suffers, all must suffer. The joy of one pervades all. So it was in the Church in the wilderness. There was enough manna for all and it was never the design of grace to selfishly permit one to be filled to overflowing while another is empty and in want. Grace develops a beautiful quality among all members. Here is a most vital truth. "For I say not this that others may be eased and ye distressed; but by equality your abundance being a supply at this present time for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want; that there may be equality; as it is written, He that gathereth much had nothing over; and he that gathered little had no lack." "If a brother or sister be naked and in lack of daily food and one of you say unto them, Go in peace, be ye warmed and filled and yet ye give them not the things needful to the body; What doth it profit?"

R. B. Willis.